



Cellar Mountain Fire WILDFIRE UPDATE

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/gwj/alerts-notice>

Fire Information: 540-492-1901

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Public Information Officers

*USDA Forest Service
George Washington & Jefferson
National Forests
Glenwood and Pedlar Ranger
Districts*

**Friday, March 18, 2016
8:30 PM**

Current Status	The Cellar Mountain Fire is located on the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests within Saint Mary's Wilderness in Augusta County, VA approximately 10 miles east of the town of Raphine, and west of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Friday firefighters scouted, constructed and improved containment lines and conducted burn-out operations to protect private property. A helicopter dropped water to assist suppression efforts.
Counties	Augusta County, VA
Estimated Acreage	Approximately 380 acres
Containment	There is no estimate of containment at this time.
Cause and Date Started	The cause of this fire is under investigation. The fire was first reported at approximately 3:00 PM on Thursday, March 17, 2016.
Resources on the Fire	65 firefighters including two Hotshot handcrews, two firefighter squads, two wildland engines, and one helicopter are working to suppress the fire.
Cooperators	Augusta County Fire-Rescue, Virginia Department of Forestry, and National Park Service - Blue Ridge Parkway
Restrictions and Closures	<p>Use caution and obey all road and trail closures for your safety. Sections of the Coal Road (Forest Road #42) are temporarily closed both due to ongoing road work and fire activities. Saint Mary's Road (FR #41) is temporarily closed.</p> <p>All trails within Saint Mary's Wilderness are temporarily closed, including: St. Mary's Trail (Forest Trail #500); St. Mary's Gorge Trail (FT #500B); Mine Bank Creek Trail (FT #500C); Mine Bank Mountain Trail (FT #503); Bald Mountain Overlook Trail (FT #504). Also closed are trailheads associated with these trails including: Lower St. Mary's trailhead at end of St. Mary's Road; Cellar Mountain trailhead on Coal Road (FR# 42); and Mine Bank trailhead at Blue Ridge Parkway.</p>
Plans for Tonight and Tomorrow	<p>Tonight firefighters will patrol and monitor firelines and the fire perimeter.</p> <p>On Saturday firefighters will continue to establish and improve containment lines using existing trails and natural features where possible.</p>
Fire weather	Overnight temperatures will decrease to the mid-30s under cloudy skies. Winds will continue from the west at nine to 14 miles per hour, diminishing near daylight. Saturday temperatures will remain in the 30s, with rain and snow predicted. Chances of precipitation increase to 80% late in the day. Little to no snow accumulation is expected.
Other Fire Information	<p>The top priority of fire managers is firefighter and public safety.</p> <p>Driving visibility may be limited in the fire vicinity due to smoky conditions.</p> <p>Area residents and visitors may smell smoke overnight and for several days.</p> <p>The next Cellar Mtn Wildfire Update will be available by 1:00 PM on Saturday, March 19.</p>